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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/904,061	07/12/2001	Lawrence C. Cole	9391-11	1903

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EXAMINER

COBURN, CORBETT B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3714

DATE MAILED: 05/12/2003

9

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/904,061

Applicant(s)

COLE ET AL.

Examiner

Corbett B. Coburn

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-50 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-50 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 September 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

2. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The following title is suggested: Gaming Machine That Automatically Prepares Tax Forms For Winnings.

Drawings

3. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the steps of inserting the agent card, selecting uninterrupted play from the menu and inserting the player card must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

4. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the circuitry described in claims 48-

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50 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

6. Claims 1, 2, 4-8 & 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bell et al. (US Patent Number 5,505,461).

Claim 1: Bell teaches a method of allowing a player to participate in an uninterrupted gaming session when a jackpot over a threshold amount is won. (Col 3, 58-60) Bell

teaches collecting and storing player-related information. (Col 5, 39-42) Bell teaches recording the jackpot-related information whenever a jackpot greater than a threshold amount is won and crediting winnings to the player. (Col 3, 30-42) Bell also teaches generating a statement referencing the recorded jackpot information and player information after the player is done playing. (Col 4, 43-60)

Claim 2: The preprogrammed gaming machine is allowed to play an uninterrupted game even if a reportable jackpot is won. (Col 3, 58-60)

Claim 4: The player is given physical access to the game of chance dedicated to uninterrupted play. (Fig 1) The player actually gets to touch the slot machine to pull handle (14).

Claim 5: Bell teaches verifying a player's identity and citizenship. (Col 5, 19-25) While the method of doing so is not stated, this could not be done without viewing documents that qualify as proof of the player's identity.

Claim 6: Bell teaches gathering tax-related information from the player. (Col 5, 19-25)

Claim 7: Bell teaches verifying the player's identity but does not explain in detail how to accomplish. (Col 5, 19-25) IRS regulations require the casino to fill out Form W2-G for certain jackpots. The instructions for the form require identification numbers from a driver's license, social security card, or voter registration to be inserted into boxes 11 & 12 of the Form W2-G. Thus looking at these documents is inherently required by Bell's disclosure.

Claim 8: Bell teaches that the tax-related information is the player's name and tax identification number (Col 5, 19-25), but does not specifically disclose collecting the

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address. Bell teaches filling out Form W2-G, which requires the player's address. Thus the collection of the address data is inherent in Bell's disclosure.

Claim 10: Bell teaches providing the player with a statement referencing jackpot information after the player is done playing. (Col 4, 53-60) The W2-G is such a statement.

7. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Bell as applied to claim 1 above.

Claim 9: IRS regulations require that the Form W2-G be filed (i.e., reported to a taxing authority) when the jackpot exceeds a certain threshold. While Bell does not specifically disclose filing the paperwork, there would be no other reason to generate the form. Thus Bell teaches reporting the jackpot to the IRS by implication or, in the alternative, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have filed the Form W2-G in order to comply with IRS regulations.

8. Claims 11-19, 22-25, 27-33, 35-44 & 47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Acres (US Patent Number 6,312,333).

Claims 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 24, 25, 28, 29, 36, 37, 39, 41, 42: Claims 11, 12, 14, 16, 17 are clearly anticipated by Acres – See Figs 1-3 & Summary of the Invention.

Claims 13, 38: Acres teaches that the database contains all the information necessary to complete the W2-G. (Col 5, 28-31) This inherently includes the player's name, address & tax identification number.

Claims 15, 40: Fig 2 shows a gaming machine (12) with a microprocessor (52) that is programmed with the protocol necessary to carry out uninterrupted play – i.e., play without intervention of casino personnel.

Claims 18, 43: Acres discloses a number of keys or buttons such as the spin button (53) and coin-in button (Col 4, 46), etc. This is essentially a keypad.

Claims 22, 27, 35, 47: Acres discloses that the gaming machine is in a casino. Thus physical access to the gaming machine is limited to casino patrons. Casino patrons are given physical access to the gaming machines.

Claim 23: Acres teaches a computer network that must inherently include a computer program product. This program enables the network to allow for an uninterrupted play session on a gaming machine even when a reportable jackpot is won – i.e., no intervention by casino personnel is required. There is code to enable a central storage computer to store player related information (88) There is code to allow a gaming machine to enter uninterrupted play in response to user input – insertion of card (66) into card reader (60). There is code to enable the gaming machine to send signals representing jackpot-related information to the central storage computer (44), which is receive and recorded whenever a reportable jackpot is won. There is code to enable the gaming machine to communicate to the central computer that an uninterrupted session has ended (i.e., the cash out signal). There is code to allow the central computer to generate a statement including player-related information and jackpot-related information (i.e., W2-G) after an uninterrupted session has ended. (Col 7, 33-43)

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Claim 30: Acres teaches gathering information necessary to complete IRS Form W2-G. IRS regulations require the casino to fill out Form W2-G for certain jackpots. The instructions for the form require identification numbers from a driver's license, social security card, or voter registration to be inserted into boxes 11 & 12 of the Form W2-G. Thus looking at these documents is inherently required by Acres' disclosure.

Claim 31: Acres teaches filing the W2-G. (Col 6, 26-28)

Claim 32: The W2-G is a statement of the jackpot-related information. It is provided to the player.

Claims 19, 33: Since the game machines can play an uninterrupted game, they must be enabled to execute a protocol putting the gaming machine in uninterrupted mode.

Claim 44: The protocol for uninterrupted play is inherently capable of being activated by an enabling event. Some event must enable the described process to take place. This event is, by definition, an enabling event.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bell as applied to claim 1 in view of Bergeron et al. (US Patent Number 4,882,473) and Pease et al. (US Patent Number 5,326,104).

Claim 3: Bell teaches the invention substantially as claimed including the use of a player card. Bell does not teach inserting an agent card or selecting uninterrupted play from a menu. Bergeron teaches insertion of an agent card for the purpose of enhancing security. (Abstract) It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have required the insertion of an agent card to enhance security. Menus are ubiquitous – virtually every computer system that allows a selection provides a menu. Pease teaches a menu-driven system and states that menu-driven systems are easy to operate. (Col 17, 67-68) It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have selected uninterrupted play from a menu screen on the display in order to make the system easy to operate.

11. Claims 20, 21, 26, 34, 45, 46, & 48-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Acres as applied to claim 19, 24, 33, or 44 (if applicable) in view of Bergeron et al. (US Patent Number 4,882,473) and Pease et al. (US Patent Number 5,326,104).

Claims 20, 26, 34, 45, 48 & 49: Acres teaches the invention substantially as claimed including the use of a player card and the details of network communication and signaling. Acres does not teach inserting an agent card or selecting uninterrupted play from a menu. Bergeron teaches insertion of an agent card for the purpose of enhancing security. (Abstract) Bergeron also teaches entering enabling information (a PIN) into a keypad (72) in communication with the gaming machine. (Col 7, 53-61) This also enhances security. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have required the insertion of an agent card and the use of a PIN prior to allowing user access in order to enhance security. While Bergeron appears to

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allow the agent card (10) to remain in the card reader when the player card is in use, Bergeron has two card readers. Acres teaches a device with one card reader. A machine with one card reader is cheaper than the same machine with two. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have removed the agent card from the card reader prior to inserting the user card so that the same card reader could be used for both cards, thus reducing costs.

Menus are ubiquitous – virtually every computer system that allows a selection provides a menu. Pease teaches a menu-driven system and states that menu-driven systems are easy to operate. (Col 17, 67-68) It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have selected uninterrupted play from a menu screen on the display in order to make the system easy to operate.

Regarding claims 48 & 49, the fact that the functions are performed indicates that the structure required to perform those functions is present.

Claim 21, 46: Acres teaches using data on a player-tracking card to identify the player using a particular machine. Since the card identifies the player that is playing the machine, removing the card would make it impossible to look up the player record as required in step 88 of Fig 3. Therefore, Acres effectively teaches deactivating uninterrupted play when the player removes the card from the card reader.

Claim 50: Acres shows a card reader that is external to the game machine. This allows the system to be added onto an existing game machine. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have the board external to the game machine in order to allow the system to be added to existing game machines.

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Conclusion

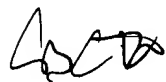
12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Reference Name	US Patent Number	Applicability
Weiss	6,511,377	Fills out W2-G
Pease et al.	5,326,104	Fills out W2-G
IRS Form W2-G	N/A	The form
Instructions for Forms W2-G and 5754	N/A	Tells how to fill out W2-G
Green	5,954,583	Security Circuits outside of game machine


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Corbett B. Coburn whose telephone number is (703) 305-3319. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5:30, Monday-Friday, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tom Hughes can be reached on (703) 308-1806. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9302 for regular communications and (703) 872-9303 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1148.



cbc
April 28, 2003



S. THOMAS HUGHES
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700